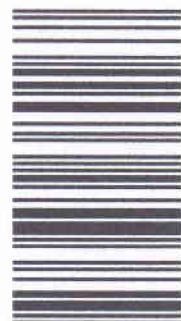


The subject of faith is one of the most intriguing and fascinating concepts in Islam. In early Islam, the concept of faith became a matter of intense debates and disputes among the scholars and theologians of various sects. In the first three centuries of early Islam, this concept inevitably became a significant feature and the task of religious and legal definitions absorbed the intellectual energies of the Muslim community to an unparalleled degree. The book aims at analyzing the facts at a later stage of history, when the Sunni scholars and jurists often scarcely distinguished in the early centuries, realized that being plainly subordinate to Allah came to the scene. They rose to the occasion and led the great majority of the Muslims to a remarkable level of understanding and unity on the main issues of faith. It was with this sense of unity, based on the Quran and expanded by the Sunnah, the fact that all common allegiance to the supreme power be restored and enhanced.

## A Theological Perspective in Early Islam

**Mohd. Shuhaimi Ishak**

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## **DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First, all praises be to Allah, the Lord of the world, Who revealed the Quran to man and taught him. All thanks to Allah, the Greatest who provided me the strength and will power to complete this book. My most heartfelt appreciation is extended to my compassionate and merciful parents, particularly my late mother, Hajah Pisah binti Badat who gave me support, love and care to me. My deepest appreciation to my wife, *Jamaliah Mohamad Ali* and my five children, for their understanding and patience throughout my study and later employment at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). I am greatly indebted to two special individuals, name Dato' Rameli Musa and Dato' Zainal Bachik, to whom I owe special gratitude and appreciation for the financial support which made this book possible. May Allah shower them with His Mercy and Blessings.

Next, I wish to express my thanks, appreciation and respect to my teacher and friend, Professor Dr. Ibrahim M. Zein, for his unfailing commitment, time and invaluable advice, not only on this book, but also for his encouragement and guidance in my pursuit of knowledge and career development at IIUM.

Finally, I wish to thank the publisher, Lambert Academic Publishing, which had confirmed its interest to publish the book.

## PREFACE

The idea of discussing the concept of faith in a thesis is to show the reliance of this concept to the absolute authority of the Quran and supplemented by the explanations of the *Sunnah*. All along the Quran exerted a steady and moderate influence and thus eliminates all extremes fanatic notions in the conceptions of faith. Nothing demonstrates this more convincingly and decisively than the Quran.

The book aims at analysing the facts of the earlier stage of Islam on the problems on the concept of faith, and the later stage the rise of the Sunni scholars and jurists often scarcely distinguished in the early centuries, realised that being plainly subordination to Allah is absolute. They rose to the occasion and led the majority of the Muslims to a remarkable level of understanding and unity in the main issues of faith.

The book consists of six chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. The chapter shall consist of a general statement, the objective of the study, problem statement, research questions and literature review.

The second chapter deals with the emergence of sects in early Islam: the period after the death of the Prophet (s.a.w), the early caliphate, the Kharijite movement, the appearance of the Shia, the opposition to Kharijite movements, the Qadarites and Jabrites, the Mutazilites and conclusion.

The third chapter deals with the theological positions of various sects: theology of the Kharijites, theology of Murjiites, theology of the Shia, theology of the Qadarites and Jabrites, Mutazilite's theology and conclusion.

Chapter four will discuss the consolidation of Sunnism: the emergence of Sunnism, aftermath of the *Mihna*, the rise of Mutakallimun, the contribution of Sunnite theologians and conclusion.

Chapter five deals with the theological position of Sunnism: the political theory of Sunnism, concept of faith, God's existence and attributes, issue of the Quran and its createdness, free will and predestination and conclusion.

Finally, chapter six deals with the Quranic conception of *iman*: the basis of faith, characteristics of faith, articles of faith, Islamic worship and code of conduct, worship in Islam, Islamic code of conduct and conclusion.

The book is of significance as it entails the sectarian divisions over major issues of faith which became a matter of intense debates and disputes which threatened to disturb the cohesive and perennial harmony and unity of the Muslims. I believe that the book will endeavour the readers to discover how the Sunni scholars and jurists managed to place the proper perspective on the understanding on the issues of faith based on the Quran and *Sunnah*, and thus the common allegiance to the supreme power be restored and enhanced.

This book is my humble attempt for the cause of Islam and I sincerely apologised for any mistake that may have gone unnoticed.

Dr. Mohd. Shuhaimi Bin Haji Ishak

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